

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 ACDA-07 TRSE-00 OPIC-03 /069 W
-----001427 080104Z /21

R 071711Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1629

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 6637

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT,SP
SUBJ: ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF THE PRESIDENCY FOR REGIONS CLAVERO
COMMENTS ON GOVERNMENT PLANS FOR REGIONS

1. DURING A SEPTEMBER 7 COURTESY CALL ON HIM BY THE CHARGE
ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF THE PRESIDENCY MANUEL CLAVERO AREVALO
HAD THE FOLLOWING TO SAY WITH REGARD TO GOVERNMENT PLANNING
FOR THE REGIONS.

2. CLAVERO SAID THAT THE MAIN FUNCTION OF HIS OFFICE WAS
TO PREPARE THE GOVERNMENT'S DRAFT OF THOSE PARTS OF THE
CONSTITUTION DEALING WITH THE REGIONS, AND ALSO PREPARE THE
GOVERNMENT'S MORE DETAILED PLANNING FOR THE DECENTRALIZATION
OF POWERS AND FUNCTIONS TO THE REGIONS THAT WAS ANTICIPATED.
HE SINGLED OUT TWO QUESTIONS THAT WERE PARTICULARLY KNOTTY.

3. THE FIRST OF THE QUESTIONS WAS WHETHER SPAIN SHOULD
BE A NATION COMPLETELY DIVIDED INTO REGIONS OR WHETHER IT
SHOULD BE A NATION IN WHICH ONLY SOME AREAS THAT HAD A
PARTICULAR REGIONAL DRIVE SHOULD HAVE SPECIAL REGIONAL
ARRANGEMENTS. HE SEEMED TO BE LEANING TOWARD THE
FORMER APPROACH. HE SAID THAT CATALONIA, THE BASQUE COUN-
TRY, HIS OWN NATIVE ANDALUCIA, GALICIA, ARAGON, CANTABRIA,
VALENCIA AND EXTREMADURA WERE MORE OR LESS NATURAL REGIONAL UNITS
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IN WHICH THERE WERE VARYING DEGREES OF REGIONAL INTERESTS.
(EVEN SO, THERE WERE WELL-KNOWN DIFFICULTIES IN PINNING
DOWN THE REAL BOUNDARIES OF THE BASQUE COUNTRY.) CON-
CEIVABLY, CENTRAL SPAIN MIGHT BE HANDLED BY A SMALL NEW
CASTILE REGION IN AND AROUND MADRID AND A SEPARATE OLD
CASTILE REGION EXTENDING TO LEON. IF IT WERE DECIDED THAT
SPAIN SHOULD BE COMPLETELY A NATION OF REGIONS, THEN THE

NEXT QUESTION WOULD BE WHETHER THE SENATE SHOULD BE BASED ON REGIONAL RATHER THAN PROVINCIAL GEOGRAPHY. THESE ISSUES WERE BEING DEBATED AND HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT THE OUTCOME WOULD BE.

4. THE SECOND OF THE QUESTIONS WAS SPECIFICALLY WHAT POWERS AND FUNCTIONS SHOULD DEVOLVE TO REGIONS, PROVINCES AND MUNICIPALITIES IN AN EFFORT AT GREATER DECENTRALIZATION. CLEARLY, THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD RETAIN SOVEREIGN POWERS AND POWERS OVER FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND NATIONAL DEFENSE AND A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF OVERALL AUTHORITY WITH RESPECT TO EDUCATION JUSTICE AND PUBLIC ORDER. BUT IT WAS ANTICIPATED THAT SUBSIDIARY UNITS WOULD HAVE MUCH GREATER AUTHORITY THAN IN THE PAST OVER PUBLIC WORKS, SOCIAL SERVICES AND SOME ASPECTS OF JUSTICE, EDUCATION AND PUBLIC ORDER. THE DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES WITH RESPECT TO PUBLIC ORDER WAS PARTICULARLY TOPICAL IN VIEW OF THE PROBLEM IN THE BASQUE COUNTRY WHERE THE CITIZENRY HATED THE CURRENT NON-BASQUE PUBLIC ORDER FORCES. A POSSIBLE ANSWER WAS TO GIVE THE BASQUE COUNTRY GREATER RESPONSIBILITY ON ITS OWN FOR PUBLIC ORDER WITHIN THE AREA BUT THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE DONE IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT IN FACT RETAINED CONTROL. HOW TO ACHIEVE THE RIGHT BALANCE HAS INDEED A TRICKY QUESTION. WITH REGARD TO EDUCATION, THE GOVERNMENT MUST INSIST ON AVAILABILITY IN ALL REGIONS OF EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES REFLECTING NATIONAL SPANISH VALUES AND USING THE SPANISH LANGUAGE AND THUS MUST RETAIN OVERALL CONTROL WITH REGARD TO EDUCATION. AT THE SAME TIME, IT WOULD PERMIT THE

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TEACHING OF REGIONAL LANGUAGES AND COURSES ON REGIONAL CULTURE (CLAVERO DID NOT GET INTO THE ISSUES OF HOW FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND AUTHORITY MIGHT BE DIVIDED.)

5. CLAVERO ALSO EXPLAINED WHAT HE UNDERSTOOD TO BE THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO TARRADELLAS AND THE GENERALITAT. HE NOTED THAT CATALONIA HAD GONE TO THE LEFT IN THE ELECTIONS AND SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT VIEWED TARRADELLAS AS A NON-MARXIST WHO MIGHT HAVE A MODERATING POLITICAL INFLUENCE ON CATALONIA. HE DID NOT SAY HOW THIS MIGHT OCCUR, BUT HE IMPLIED THAT IT WAS PARTLY FOR THIS REASON THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD DECIDED TO DEAL WITH TARRADELLAS IN THIS PERIOD. HE INDICATED EXPECTATION THAT THE GENERALITAT WOULD BE RE-ESTABLISHED, PROBABLY ON SEPTEMBER 11, BUT THAT OF COURSE IT WOULD BE PURELY PROVISIONAL AND TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT SYMBOLIC, PENDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF WHATEVER REGIONAL REGIME WAS VOTED BY THE CORTES. HE SAID THAT THE GENERALITAT WOULD NOT HAVE LEGISLATIVE POWERS BUT RATHER POWERS OF REPRESENTATION AND NEGOTIATION. EATON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PROVINCE, DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Litigation Code IDs:
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Litigation History:
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Message ID: 43484a4b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1366897
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF THE PRESIDENCY FOR REGIONS CLAVERO COMMENTS ON GOVERNMENT PLANS FOR REGIONS
TAGS: PINT, SP, (CLAVERO AREVALO, MANUEL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/43484a4b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009